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Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

Provisional

6844th meeting
Tuesday, 9 October 2012, 10.25 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Rosenthal	(Guatemala)
Members:	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Ms. Guo Xiaomei
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Briens
	Germany	Mr. Eick
	India	Mr. Ahamed
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Karev
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Sierra Leone to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the members of the Council, I welcome Her Excellency Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Ms. Brenda Hollis, Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, to participate in this meeting.

I should like to acknowledge the presence in the Council Chamber of Ms. Binta Mansaray, Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Ms. Claire Carlton-Hanciles, Principal Defender of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

I extend the warmest welcome to the four representatives of the Court.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Justice Fisher.

Mrs. Fisher: On behalf of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, I thank the Council for this opportunity to address members on the achievements of the Special Court and the upcoming completion of our mandate. We are especially privileged to be speaking during the presidency of Guatemala, a nation that shares with us a commitment to fighting impunity and to striving for gender justice.

We are also very pleased to address the Council on the twelfth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). The Special Court of Sierra Leone is a living example of the progress of the resolution. For the first time in the history of international tribunals, all four principals — the President, the Prosecutor, the Registrar and the Principal Defender — are women. We owe a special thanks to UN-Women, Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice and the United Nations Development Programme, first, because of their tireless efforts in advancing the goals of resolution 1325 (2000). On a more personal level, we thank them for financing our journey here, without which we could not appear before the Council today.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone will soon complete its final case. We will deliver the final judgement in the appellate proceedings in the case of Mr. Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia. That final judgement will determine Mr. Taylor's guilt or innocence. The Court will then transition to residual status and close its doors. It will be the first international criminal tribunal to do so.

I could say that the Special Court has delivered on its mandate, that it has contributed to ending impunity and that it has brought justice to the people of Sierra Leone. I could say that but I think that it is more important that members hear it from the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia themselves.

At the end of May, with funding from the European Union, an independent nationwide survey was conducted in Sierra Leone and Liberia. It was designed to measure the impact and legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Some 79.16 per cent, that is, almost 80 per cent, of the people surveyed believe that the Special Court had accomplished its mandate.

The document rightly attributes such results to the vision established during the early stages of the Court of it being an institution embedded in and responsive to the expectations and needs of the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

For that, credit and thanks are owed to the Registrar, Ms. Binta Mansaray, whose vision it was to take the Court to the people and who designed an outreach programme that was both geographically and demographically inclusive and participatory.

When questioned on what that mandate entailed, the people surveyed expressed their understanding that it was to prosecute those with the greatest responsibility for the war from all factions, without regard for the side on which they fought or the power of the position they held. For that, credit and thanks are owed to the Prosecutor, Ms. Brenda Hollis, and her predecessors.

But the people surveyed also indicated that they believed the mandate was to bring justice and the rule of law to their war-torn part of the world. It cannot be forgotten that faith in the outcome of those cases depends on faith in the process — that it be fair, that the rights

of the accused be respected and that they be zealously represented. For that, credit and thanks are owed to the Principal Defender, Ms. Claire Carlton-Hanciles, and the dedicated defence teams she oversees.

Most heartening and humbling is the fact that the survey found that 91 per cent of people in Sierra Leone and 78 per cent of people in Liberia believe that the Special Court has contributed to bringing peace to their countries. The Court that the United Nations established and has supported for the past 10 years has been judged by 91 per cent of the people surveyed to have contributed to bringing peace to Sierra Leone. For that, credit and thanks are owed to the Security Council. The Special Court's successes are truly the Council's. Celebrating the success of the Special Court is celebrating the Council's steadfast commitment to the work of the Court. On behalf of the Special Court, the four Principals would like to thank the Council, the States Members of the United Nations and the international community as a whole for their enduring support and assistance over the past decade. We congratulate them on their vision and dedication, and we encourage them to recognize the immensity of our joint achievement.

Because of that vision, the Special Court for Sierra Leone is the first of its kind. It is the first partnership between national authorities and the United Nations to create a credible system of post-conflict justice that meets international standards. It is the first hybrid tribunal created to assist a State that desired post-conflict justice but did not have sufficient capacity to ensure it. It is the first United Nations-sponsored tribunal to carry out its work in the territory where serious violations of international humanitarian law were committed, thereby ensuring that the survivors of conflict are participants in justice, and not mere bystanders to it.

And it has been successful. That success is not only an accomplishment for the present, but an important one for the future as well, because it is a proven model for positive complementarity. As the Special Court's success proves, complementarity is a reality, not just an aspiration. My colleagues and I, the four Principals of the Court, are visible evidence of that reality. We are two Sierra Leoneans and two internationals united in our commitment to post-conflict justice. What is special about the Special Court is the synergy of local commitment, knowledge and talent with international financial and human resources. Complementarity works.

The Special Court's example should dispel doubts that positive complementarity can succeed in difficult environments. It must be remembered that the Court came about because the Government of Sierra Leone had the courage and innovation to request a partnership with the international community at a time when the situation in Sierra Leone continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region. The conflict had destroyed national legal and judicial institutions, and Sierra Leone alone did not have the human and financial resources to realize its desire for justice.

Confronted with challenges, the Special Court innovated. Faced with isolated communities, a multiplicity of languages and limited communications infrastructure, the Special Court's outreach programme innovated. Under the leadership of Registrar Mansaray, a Sierra Leonean who knows her country and its people, it literally took the Court to the people. Traveling over roads that were no more than trails, outreach workers crisscrossed the country again and again with the latest video summaries of the actual trials, in mobile units consisting of video players and a generator they carried with them.

When, from the first, the unique concerns and experiences of women and girl survivors of the war were recognized, as were the personal and cultural barriers to participation in the justice process, the Court innovated. Gender-sensitive approaches to witness support and outreach were developed in partnership with local women's organizations and resources. Accommodations were made by judges in the courtroom to encourage women's voices to be heard. Those voices have been reflected in the jurisprudence of the Court, which was the first to recognize forced marriage as a crime against humanity and sexual violence as a form of terrorism.

Other jurisprudential firsts have been truly remarkable. The Special Court was the first to develop jurisprudence on the recruitment and use of child soldiers — jurisprudence that was used and acknowledged by the International Criminal Court in its first trial judgment in the case of *The Prosecutor vs. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*. The Special Court was the first to rule on the effect of national amnesties in international law, on the issues of immunity involving sitting Heads of State, and on a matter close to the hearts of those in this Chamber — the crime of attacks on peacekeepers.

On front after front, the Special Court has developed not only jurisprudence but also tools, practices and programmes to address the specific needs of a post-conflict society. The Special Court stands ready

to share the knowledge and expertise it has gained. We invite Member States to draw on the Court's work and to utilize its programmes as part of their own national strategies.

We must keep in mind how fragile our accomplishment will be if we fail to keep faith with the people of the region who put their trust in the Council and the Court. Our responsibility to those people will not cease. It must be taken up and advanced by the Residual Special Court of Sierra Leone.

Residual responsibilities are not an afterthought or burden. Ensuring the protection of witnesses who appeared before the Special Court encourages more people to come forward and to be witnesses in other courts involved in fighting impunity. Failing to ensure their protection will guarantee the opposite result. Preserving the archives ensures that the work of the Special Court remains an accessible, unequivocal record of the war. Failing to preserve them invites revisionist history and denial of the suffering endured by Sierra Leone's people. Supervising the enforcement of sentences ensures that the Special Court continues to lead by example in protecting the human rights and dignity of all people, as demanded by the rule of law. Failure to provide that oversight erodes our reputation as a just institution and undermines the moral authority of all our work.

The Residual Special Court will face particular challenges in obtaining voluntary contributions to fund its operations. The support of the Security Council will be essential to ensuring that it can carry out its important responsibilities.

On behalf of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, we once again extend our sincere thanks to the Security Council, the States Members of the United Nations and the international community as a whole for their enduring support and assistance. And we congratulate them on that accomplishment.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ms. Hollis.

Ms. Hollis: I echo the comments made by President Fisher and thank the Council for its decision to convene this briefing on the Special Court for Sierra Leone. As the Prosecutor of the Special Court, I am honoured to be given this opportunity to brief the Council. I will focus my remarks on the achievements of the Special Court and on those of the Office of the Prosecutor in particular. I will also discuss some of the challenges faced by the Office of the Prosecutor, our responses to those challenges and certain challenges the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone may face.

I turn first to the achievements of the Special Court. President Fisher has mentioned some of its many successes. In my view, the principal achievement of the Court, and its most important legacy, will be the fulfilment of our mandate to prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility for the horrific crimes committed against the people of Sierra Leone. All the members of the Office of the Prosecutor, past and present, can be proud of their significant contribution to that accomplishment. The achievements of the Special Court are the product of the hard work and dedication of all the organs and members of the Special Court, who are to be commended for their untiring efforts. With the Council's permission, I will limit my comments to the achievements of the Office of the Prosecutor.

The Office of the Prosecutor has acted expeditiously. We commenced operations in mid-2002 and presented the first indictments in March 2003. Guided by the Special Court's statute, we focused our efforts on prosecuting those who bear the greatest responsibility. Consequently, we presented 13 indictments, charging senior leaders of the three main factions in the Sierra Leone conflict and Charles Taylor, the then President of Liberia. The first trials began in 2004. With the exception of the case against Mr. Taylor, all cases were completed through appeal by October 2009. Unfortunately, it was not until 2006 that Mr. Taylor was surrendered to the Special Court, three years after he was indicted.

The Office of the Prosecutor expeditiously and effectively prosecuted Mr. Taylor. We amended the indictment against him, reducing the charges in order to present the case more speedily. We presented evidence that resulted in Mr. Taylor's conviction on all charges, a result noted by the Security Council in resolution 2065 (2012). This is the first conviction of a former Head of State by an international criminal tribunal since the Nuremberg trials in 1946. On the basis of that verdict, Mr. Taylor was sentenced to 50 years' imprisonment.

Mr. Taylor was convicted of the charges for two reasons. First, he was convicted of planning the attacks that culminated in the January 1999 invasion of Freetown and the mass crimes that resulted from those attacks. Secondly, he was convicted of aiding and abetting members of the Revolutionary United Front and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council in the commission of the charged crimes. Both the Office

of the Prosecutor and Mr. Taylor have appealed the judgement and the sentence.

We are proud of our other achievements as well. The Office of the Prosecutor has been an active participant in the Special Court's excellent outreach programme, which has been widely commended for its effectiveness. Through the programme we have succeeded in engaging the people of Sierra Leone in a judicial process carried out in their name, and have fostered a two-way conversation between the Prosecutor and the affected communities.

The Office of the Prosecutor has also contributed significantly to international jurisprudence. We were the first to charge and prosecute the crimes of enlistment, recruitment and use of child soldiers, attacks on peacekeepers and forced marriage as a crime against humanity. The resulting jurisprudence can be relied on by other international as well as national courts.

Many deserve credit for the Special Court's achievements, and I would like to express my gratitude to them. They include, in particular, the people of Sierra Leone, whose demand for justice — the Council will recall — resulted in the creation of the Court; the Security Council, which, through resolution 1315 (2000) and subsequent others, responded to that demand; the Secretary-General, whose work advanced the creation of the Special Court and whose continued support strengthened it; very importantly, the victims, survivors and those members of the perpetrator groups who showed the courage and commitment needed to give information and to testify, both for the prosecution and the defence; the Government and the people of Sierra Leone, for their continuing commitment to the Court and the support they have provided; the Member States that have faithfully served on the Special Court Management Committee; the 51 States, the United Nations, the European Commission and other organizations that have provided funding and other support for the Special Court; and civil society organizations in Sierra Leone, Liberia and worldwide, for their commitment to justice and support for the Court.

Particular mention must be made of the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone as partners in establishing the Special Court. Together they created a statute that achieved two important goals. First, as I have already discussed, the statute, appropriately, focused our efforts on those who bear the greatest responsibility. Secondly, the statute ensured that the Special Court would build on the strong foundation put in place by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, both as to substantive and procedural law. The Special Court has indeed built on that foundation in carrying out its mandate. I encourage all tribunals and courts that have followed to build on that expanded foundation.

As President Fisher has stated, the Special Court has faced numerous challenges during its decade of operation. I will now highlight some of those challenges relating to the Office of the Prosecutor. The record will show that we have responded positively to them in ways that may be relevant for other courts and tribunals. Of the most demanding challenges before us, I would like to address three: indictment, staffing and witness issues.

I will first address indictments. Charges are determined, first and foremost, by the evidence before a prosecutor. As with other prosecutors faced with a multitude of crimes committed across a wide chronological period and geographic area, we had the task of developing indictments that balanced two goals: first, arriving at a true reflection of the nature and scale of the crimes to which an accused could be linked and the full extent of his criminal conduct, and, secondly, bringing charges that could be expeditiously proved. To achieve that balance, we focused our indictments on representative crimes and on the scope of the criminal conduct of each accused person.

I now turn to staffing challenges. The Office of the Prosecutor had the task of recruiting a sufficient number of staff to fulfil our exacting mandate and with retaining enough experienced staff to maintain the continuity of our work. Those challenges were amplified by the uncertain nature of voluntary funding. We responded by using short-term contracts whenever possible, giving us flexibility in meeting our needs; by reducing permanent posts in an orderly manner as we reached prosecution milestones; and by relying heavily on experienced, talented professionals seconded to us by States. Those secondments proved to be an effective and financially desirable option. For example, we could not have conducted our investigations without the local knowledge and expertise of Sierra Leonean investigators loaned to us by the host Government.

I will now address witness issues. Of course, without witnesses, no trials would be possible. Our main challenges were to communicate and meet with some 800 potential witnesses in a safe environment and, in cooperation with the Registry's Witness and Victims

Section, to ensure the security before, during and after the trial, of the more than 300 prosecution witnesses who testified. We have relied extensively on investigators seconded from the Sierra Leone police to enable us to contact our witnesses in a manner that protected their security. We have also had regular contact with our witnesses before and after trial, ensuring that we receive timely alerts of any security risk or harassment. Allow me to emphasize that the security of witnesses and the enforcement of witness protection orders were and remain significant challenges. For example, in their testimony, many witnesses named individuals who had committed horrific crimes; those witnesses continue to live among the individuals named and their supporters.

I now turn to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone. Some of the challenges it may face can be anticipated today. The Residual Special Court plans to have a relatively small footprint. That is a positive response to the challenge of balancing the requirements of its mandate with efficiency and financial stability. Such efficiency may be enhanced by sharing an administrative platform with other courts. As already emphasized, ensuring the security of witnesses and the enforcement of witness protection orders will be a continuing and significant challenge. Indicative of that challenge, this year, the Special Court has convicted five individuals of contempt for interfering with witnesses; those convictions are, of course, subject to appeal. As made clear by article 18 of its statute, the Residual Special Court shall be responsible for ensuring the security of witnesses and those put at risk by witness testimony. It shall also be responsible for the enforcement of the protection orders of the Special Court and any put in place by the Residual Special Court.

In order to fulfil that mandate, it is critical that the Residual Court will have the resources necessary to protect witnesses and ensure that people who came forward, often at the risk of their well-being, will continue to receive the protection of the Court they have so well served.

I wish again to thank the Security Council for this opportunity to brief its members about the Special Court. In preparing my briefing, I was reminded of resolution 1315 (2000). The prudence of that resolution has been made clear to me every time I engage the people of Sierra Leone. I thank the Council for its wisdom, including in adopting that resolution, and for its support for the Special Court.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Prosecutor Hollis, for her briefing. I now give the floor to Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Mrs. Jusu (Sierra Leone): At the outset, allow me, as I take the floor for the first time, to congratulate the President on his assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to wish him full success during his tenure. I would also ask that he accept our thanks and appreciation for the inclusion of a briefing on the Special Court for Sierra Leone in the Security Council's programme of work. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his unwavering support for the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and for backing the efforts undertaken by the Court to carry out its mandate.

We commend the President of the Court and the Prosecutor for their comprehensive briefings to the Council on the Court's operations during the period under review, and also for the Court's unremitting efforts in implementing its mandate in accordance with resolution 1315 (2000), adopted on 14 August 2000, including the Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone, signed on 16 January 2002. Accordingly, we welcome the new completion strategy adopted by the Court's management committee and wish to underscore the various challenges outlined in the strategy, in particular the perennial funding gap for the completion of the Court's mandate and its residual tasks.

The Special Court represents an effective partnership between the Government and the people of Sierra Leone and the United Nations for the purposes of promoting justice and fighting impunity for heinous crimes committed in Sierra Leone during the civil war. As the first hybrid tribunal created to assist a State in addressing impunity for crimes against humanity, the Special Court has made unprecedented contributions to gender justice and has laid the foundation in international criminal jurisprudence for designating acts of forced marriage, sexual violence, sexual slavery and the recruitment and use of child soldiers during the conflict as punishable crimes. It has also successfully established that wanton attacks on United Nations peacekeepers are proscribed and that perpetrators are liable to be prosecuted. Furthermore, the Special Court's jurisprudence underscores the importance of understanding gender-related traumas from the point of view of those who experienced them, as well as the importance of understanding suffering within local

cultural contexts. It has also made critical contributions to national reconciliation efforts and to the restoration and maintenance of international peace and security in the subregion.

Taking into consideration what I have just said, one cannot gainsay that the Special Court has successfully delivered on the goals set for it by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations. Indeed, that tribunal has proven to be equal to the task as evidenced by its landmark judgements and contributions to the rule of law at both the national and the international levels and as an important adjunct to our peacebuilding initiatives.

Despite those special and compelling accolades, it is a matter of common knowledge that the Court continues to face significant funding gaps that endanger the completion of its judicial mandate and its residual mechanism. We wish to express much appreciation and gratitude for Member States' support for the Court in the form of voluntary contributions and for the life-saving subsidies from the United Nations, as well as to underscore the need for the United Nations and the international community to continue to support the Special Court so that it can complete its good work.

Needless to say, the successful completion of the Court's mandate would send a powerful message that the international community strongly supports institutions established to hold accountable those responsible for war crimes and, in so doing, would deter or minimize the incidence of the perpetration of such atrocities in the future. We therefore count on Member States and the international community to continue to support the Court so that it can complete its work and help facilitate its effective transition to the Residual Special Court immediately upon completion.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone underscores the importance of the Special Court in fighting impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, and in contributing to peace and stability in Sierra Leone and the subregion.

Some notable and recognizable milestones attained by the courts so far would include victory for hundreds of former child soldiers and adoptees, who had the letters "R-U-F" carved or engraved with a hot iron on their back and chest to prevent them from escaping. It would be a victory for victims of sexual violence and a victory for human rights and democracy. However, the victory, so greatly acclaimed, will be incomplete if the want of adequate resources and financial impediments deter the tribunal from fairly and fully completing its mandate and its residual task to their logical conclusions. We therefore count on the Council to spare no effort to avoid such an undesirable scenario and to launch appropriate mechanisms to provide the much needed relief and assistance to the Court for its continued survival.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Minister Jusu for her statement.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Ahamed (India): Let me begin by thanking the Guatemalan delegation for organizing today's briefing on the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Having started my career as an advocate, the topic under discussion is of special interest to me. I would also like to thank the President of the Special Court, The Honourable Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, for presenting the report on the activities and achievements of the Court since the last briefing to the Security Council on 16 July 2009 (see S/PV.6163).

The Special Court was established in 2000 by resolution 1315 (2000) at the request of the Government of Sierra Leone. Since its establishment, the Court has successfully carried out its mandate set out in the Statute of the Court. Three of the four main cases have been completed, and the last case is in the final stages of judgement in the Appeals Chamber.

Keeping in view its track record, we hope that the Special Court will successfully accomplish its mandate by 30 December 2013, when the Appeals Chamber is expected to give its verdict in the Charles Taylor case. We appreciate the efforts of the United Nations and the international community to assist States, upon their request, in restoring peace and stability, including through the fight against impunity.

The enforcement of sentences with the assistance of the Government of Rwanda is a good example of international cooperation in furthering the cause of justice. We have also taken note of the Special Court's outreach activities, witness protection efforts and archive development programme, including through capacity-building initiatives that will strengthen national judicial institutions in Sierra Leone. We also appreciate the creation of a Peace Museum, which will contribute to the efforts aimed at national reconciliation in the country.

As the Special Court prepares for closure, focusing on residual issues such as the enforcement of sentences, the protection of witnesses and the preservation of archives of the Special Court assume great importance. In that regard, there is a need for continued support to the Special Court as well as to the Residual Special Court.

India has a long history of a cordial relationship with Sierra Leone. India played a major role in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone until 2001. Since then, India has continued to partner with the Government of Sierra Leone in its reconstruction efforts. India has extended loans and credit lines worth $94.45 million over the past few years to enable Sierra Leone to procure agricultural equipment and to modernize and expand its national telecommunications network, SierraTel. Our partnership has included the restoration and rehabilitation of six potable water and solar street lighting projects. As part of our bilateral cooperation programme, India is providing 45 training slots to Sierra Leone this year. India has also offered to set up an India-Africa information and communication technology centre in Sierra Leone.

Before I conclude, I would like to convey our best wishes to the Government and people of Sierra Leone as they prepare for national elections next month. The successful conduct of the elections will be a major milestone in post-conflict peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, which should help in the process of national reconciliation and the further consolidation of democracy in the country. India remains committed to continuing its partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone, particularly in capacity-building and human resources development.

Mr. Tatham (United Kingdom): In September 2000, with the adoption of resolution 1315 (2000), the Council demonstrated its commitment to the fight against impunity and the restoration of peace and security in Sierra Leone. Given its deep concern that serious violations of international humanitarian law had been committed in Sierra Leone, the Council was determined to bring those responsible to account, in accordance with international standards of justice, fairness and due process of law.

The Council requested the Secretary-General to work with the Government of Sierra Leone to establish an independent special court to prosecute those persons bearing the greatest responsibility for the commission of those crimes, including those leaders who threatened the peace process in Sierra Leone. Today, as we have heard from the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, that vital task is almost complete. The United Kingdom congratulates the Special Court for its significant achievements. And we would like to thank the President of the Court and the Prosecutor for their briefings.

We are also grateful to Guatemala for convening this meeting during its presidency of the Council. Like Guatemala, the United Kingdom believes that it is important and timely to take stock of the progress made by the Special Court — to acknowledge how much it has achieved and to better understand the tasks that remain.

The United Kingdom looks forward to September 2013, when the Special Court is due to become the first modern war crimes tribunal to successfully complete its mandate. We do not underestimate the complexity and significance of the appellate proceedings in the case against Charles Taylor. The United Kingdom strongly believes that the completion of the trial of Charles Taylor by the Special Court was a landmark for international justice.

As the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom at the time said, the trial proceedings played an important role in helping the people of Sierra Leone come to terms with the past and consolidate national reconciliation. It is heartening to hear from the President of the Special Court that the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia feel so strongly that the Special Court has contributed to bringing peace to their countries. The Special Court's prosecution of Charles Taylor sends a strong message that the international community will not allow serious crimes to be committed with impunity. It signals that the reach of international justice is long and patient.

Since its inception in 2002, the United Kingdom has been a leading supporter of the Special Court.

United Kingdom funding has reached approximately $44 million and accounts for some 20 per cent of the Court's voluntary contributions to date. That includes a contribution of almost $1 million in March. We reaffirm our commitment to imprisoning Charles Taylor in the United Kingdom if the Appeals Chamber upholds his conviction and if the President asks us to do so.

Our support for the Special Court will remain strong long after the Taylor appeal and the high-profile work of the Special Court has come to an end. But the achievements of the Special Court do not begin and end with Charles Taylor in The Hague. The United Kingdom commends the Special Court in Freetown for successfully

completing three important trials of eight former rebel leaders and conducting five contempt proceedings. Furthermore, the Special Court's invaluable role in building the capacity of the Sierra Leonean legal system will certainly be a lasting legacy, as will the Court's vital outreach programmes, which have made its work accessible to many people in Sierra Leone and Liberia, contributing to reconciliation and raising awareness on important issues such as child soldiers and sexual violence in armed conflict. We welcome the way in which the Court has developed gender-sensitive approaches to witness support and outreach in partnership with local women's organizations and resources.

But the United Kingdom cannot fail to acknowledge the Special Court's serious and challenging financial circumstances. Funding shortfalls risk the completion of appellate proceedings in the Taylor case. Funds are needed urgently. Longer term, the Residual Special Court requires secure and sustainable funding in order to continue to protect witnesses, manage the detention of those convicted, and protect the archives. The United Kingdom is considering all funding options for the Special Court and the Residual Special Court, and we urge other members of the Council, and indeed all Member States, to do so as well.

The United Kingdom applauds the Special Court for its groundbreaking achievements. We remain ready to support the Court as its completes its mandate in order to sure that it's legacy is preserved.

Mr. Eick (Germany): I thank the Guatemalan presidency for having organized this briefing with representatives of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. We are also very grateful for the presentations made today by the Court's President and Prosecutor. I would like to take this opportunity to commend them once again for their work and for the Court's achievements. I would also like to thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone for her statement.

I would like to make the following points. First, Germany recognizes the invaluable contribution of the Special Court to the rule of law, ending impunity and maintaining peace and security in Sierra Leone and beyond. By trying those accused of the most horrendous war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the brutal conflict in Sierra Leone, the Court has brought some justice to the victims of those crimes, and it continues to stand out as a testament to the determination and capacity of States to prosecute international crimes in partnership with the United Nations.

The Court has undertaken major capacity-building initiatives aimed at rebuilding the criminal justice system of Sierra Leone. I would also like to express our appreciation for the important outreach activities undertaken to inform the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone of the Court's work.

Secondly, the Court has made legal history on many accounts. Both its Statute and jurisprudence have recognized the need to address gender-based crimes, including forced marriage, and have thus transformed the commitment contained in resolution 1325 (2000) into practice. The Court has set a precedent for prosecuting the crimes of enlisting, recruiting and using child soldiers, and has thereby shaped international law in this area, not least by providing important references for the recent conviction of Thomas Lubanga by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Most important, the indictment, trial and conviction of Charles Taylor represent a landmark in criminal proceedings against a head of State. Together with the conviction of Thomas Lubanga by the ICC and of those responsible for atrocities committed in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, respectively, the Taylor case has made clear that the age of accountability has in fact begun.

Thirdly, the work of the Court is not yet complete. The appeals process in the Taylor case needs to be concluded, and several contempt proceedings against individuals who have threatened witnesses are pending before the Court.

At the same time, the Court is preparing its transition into a residual mechanism, with the target date of 30 September 2013. We look forward to the conclusion of the relevant agreements between the United Nations and Sierra Leone.

This briefing is a welcome opportunity to highlight the Council's appreciation of, and full support for, the Special Court. The draft presidential statement to be read out later today does just that.

Germany has made significant financial contributions to the Court's budget, as well as for witness protection and legal experts programmes. In addition, we have been actively engaged in ensuring the United Nations subvention granted to the Court in 2010.

As we are aware of the Court's present dire financial situation, Germany supports further efforts to

find practical solutions in order to ensure the successful completion of the Court's work.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, and the Prosecutor, Ms. Brenda Hollis, for their briefings. We also thank Her Excellency Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone, for her statement. We welcome the report of the Special Court, which was shared with the Council.

Let me reiterate Pakistan's complete support for the important work of the United Nations-established special courts and tribunals. We commend their work in promoting accountability and fighting impunity in the particular situations of relevance.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone was established, pursuant to resolution 1315 (2000), to prosecute persons responsible for the horrific crimes committed during the conflict in Sierra Leone. As the Court approaches the conclusion of its mandate, it deserves recognition for its work in addressing the most painful chapter in the history of Sierra Leone. The Court has dealt well with the crimes within its jurisdiction. The outreach activities of the Court should help facilitate national reconciliation. Programmes and activities for strengthening the national legal and criminal justice system in Sierra Leone is another important contribution of the Court.

As the Court winds up its activities, there are still important areas of work that need to be brought to a conclusion. Most important is the completion of the appellate proceedings with regard to Mr. Charles Taylor. We take note of the work under way for transferring the long-term aspects of the Court's mandate to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, including the enforcement of sentences, witness protection, the management of archives and the trials of those still at large. We urge all concerned stakeholders to cooperate in this endeavour.

I would like to conclude by commending the President, Prosecutor and other members of the Special Court for their efforts and achievements.

Mr. Menan (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to thank the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their very informative briefings on the achievements of the Court, its ongoing work and progress in the completion strategy of the Court and on the establishment of the Residual Special Court.

I also thank the Minister from Sierra Leone for her briefing.

We welcome the fact that the Special Court for Sierra Leone has been able to overcome at least two features that could have been considered as defects that would generate doubt regarding its ability to execute its mandate satisfactorily.

First, there were the uncertainties related to the financing of a hybrid or internationalized jurisdiction based on an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is therefore unlike the two ad hoc tribunals, namely, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) — which are subsidiary bodies to the Security Council and thus benefit from guaranteed United Nations financing.

Secondly, it was also the first time that such a jurisdiction had been located in the territory of a country that was the theatre of the acts that were to be the subject of prosecution, where the socio-political trauma and resentment risked generating insecurity and compromising the country's position in terms of proper implementation of the mandate.

Despite those features that were part of its creation, there is remarkable proof today that the Special Court has contributed to strengthened stability in Sierra Leone and in the West African subregion, while working to put an end to the culture of impunity.

It is also recognized that the Court has fostered unexpected progress in the area of international criminal justice and notable enrichment of international criminal law. In that connection, Togo welcomes the work of the Special Court, which has enable it to bring to conclusion numerous key trials, among which we would include the trial of Charles Taylor, which is currently on appeal and is slated for completion on 30 September 2013.

It goes without saying that elements of jurisprudence from the Special Court will continue to contribute to enriching debates aimed at promoting progress in international judicial systems, both nationally and internationally, in areas including forced marriage as a crime against humanity and sexual violence in times of war and terrorism, among others.

My delegation also welcomes the fact that the Special Court has been able to tackle one of the major challenges facing jurisdictions of its nature, in reaching an agreement with the Government of Rwanda to

ensure the execution of sentences handed down to those convicted.

Moreover, my country's delegation believes that the commitments made by the Special Court to ensure the lasting effect of its achievements in the fight against impunity, through the conservation of its archives, as well as awareness-raising and dissemination of its results, are notable signs of progress.

In particular, Togo would like to support the idea of preserving memory on the part of the Special Court, which it pursues under its mandate by creating museums and mausoleums in order to shape and fix images that are aimed at informing the collective awareness so that those acts are never committed again. However, given the fact that imagery can sometimes surprise, and therefore produce results opposite to those anticipated, my delegation hopes that the Court will be able to take steps to accompany those images with the teaching activities necessary to quell perverse effects that could — contrary to our desire - inspire and incite repeated atrocities.

As in the case of the two ad hoc tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, the Special Court's completion strategy should not in any way open doors to hasty trials or impunity. We welcome the fact that the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone is to continue after it has closed, through the implementation of the mandate of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, to fight against impunity and bring to account those who are still fugitives from the law, ensuring the execution of sentences and promoting the protection of witnesses. It is therefore important that the Special Court work relentlessly to respect the timetables and forecasts for the completion strategy and for the closing of the cases that are still pending.

My delegation remains convinced that the Special Court's success has been made possible partly thanks to active cooperation among States, and that that cooperation is also crucial not merely at the current critical phase as the mandate draws to a close, but also as the Court seeks to ensure the launching and success of the Residual Special Court.

That is why Togo calls upon all States to continue to cooperate with the Special Court in contributing to its budget, on the one hand, and, on the other, to extend equal support with regard to cooperation and financial support to the Residual Special Court.

Mr. Laher (South Africa): Allow me to thank Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Ms. Brenda Hollis, Prosecutor of the Special Court for their comprehensive briefings on the current status of the work of the Special Court. We also appreciate the perspectives put forward by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

The fight against impunity remains an important building block for an international community free of conflict and violence. Long-lasting peace must therefore include the establishment of the rule of law and the promotion of justice.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone should be commended for the positive role it has played in strengthening stability in Sierra Leone and the wider subregion. The Court is an example of how the fight against impunity can be promoted by international cooperation between situation countries and the international community.

South Africa pays tribute to the Court for its sterling work in the fight against impunity and in particular, for the fact that it remains on track to complete its substantive work by September 2013. Three major cases have already been completed up to the appeals phase, while the trial judgement has been delivered in the final case of the Prosecutor, namely, the case of Charles Taylor, which is now in its appellate phase.

As highlighted by both the President and the Prosecutor of the Court, the contribution and achievement of the Special Court in setting jurisprudence precedent will have a lasting impact on our collective efforts to ensure accountability and establish rule of law.

We are also pleased to note the smooth implementation of the prisoner transfer agreement with Rwanda.

We commend the Special Court for its efforts to reach out to affected communities. The outreach to victims of sexual and gender-based crimes is particularly welcome, given that women, girls and children often carry a heavy burden of conflict. The outreach activities are critical in ensuring the reintegration of societies and breaking the circle of violence.

That the outreach work has been successful is borne out by the approval figures produced in the recent surveys on Sierra Leone and Liberia. As the report before the Council notes, the Court is a model of

positive complementarity. That is a principle that South Africa strongly advocates.

My delegation wishes to reiterate what the President of the Court has said. The Special Court shows that complementarity is a reality, not simply an aspiration, and that it works.

We have taken note of the preparations for the winding down of the Court, including the signing and ratification of the Agreement on the Establishment of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone and the minimal functions it is expected to perform. We are particularly pleased that the agreement provides for assets of the Special Court to be transferred to Sierra Leone.

We hope that the lasting legacy of the Court will not only be the accountability of those responsible for egregious crimes, but also national reconciliation and sustainable peace, not only in Sierra Leone but throughout the region and our continent. We are confident that the Peace Museum will contribute to that very important objective.

The Special Court has made an important contribution to the cause of international justice. In that regard, it is be vital for the international community to continue its support for the work of the Special Court until the completion of its mandate.

Mr. Karev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, we would like to thank the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Prosecutor and the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone for their briefings on activities.

Today's briefings have been of particular importance in summing up the essence of the work of the Special Court.

The Special Court is scheduled to close on 30 September 2013, after which date a small residual mechanism will be launched. International judiciairy mechanisms already have experience in transitioning to a mode of residual jurisdiction. As the Council knows, the Rwandan office of the Residual Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia opened in July.

Taking into account the effective work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone in terms of phasing out its activities, we hope that it will be able to avoid the problems that other courts have encountered. We note the rapid pace with which the Special Court has conducted its proceedings, including the most recent case, that is, Charles Taylor's. The report provides particularly indicative information to the effect that the Appeals Chamber never exceeded the time allotted to it for its cases. That is a good example for those courts that constantly violate the timetables for proceedings while saying that it is ostensibly impossible to accurately predict the time needed for their trial activities.

Overall, the outcome of the work of the Special Court should be evaluated positively. It has made a considerable contribution to the development of international criminal justice. In being the first such hybrid court, including both international and national elements, and having been established in a post-conflict phase, it has contributed to strengthening the rule of law at both the international and the national levels.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to first welcome the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, the Prosectuor, Ms. Brenda Hollis, and the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, Mrs. Ebun Jusu. The briefings that they have given us today give a clear indication of the important work and mission that the Special Court for Sierra Leone has completed.

This is also a good opportunity to reiterate the firm support of the members of the Security Council for the Special Court and to express our appreciation and recognition for all that has been accomplished and for all of the progress that has been made. Of course, among those results is one that we would consider most visible, namely, the prosecution and sentencing of Charles Taylor. That represents a true watershed in the area of prosecuting individual criminals under international law. The Special Court has made an extremely important contribution to developing international criminal justice. It has also had a positive impact in both Sierra Leone and Liberia.

In that respect, we believe that the activities aimed at disseminating and promoting the Court's work have been essential, as they are the best way to ensure a direct positive effect on the rule of law and governance in those countries and the region.

Lastly, I would like to underscore that the Special Court has also been very active in implementing its completion strategy. In that connection, we welcome the signing of an agreement between the United

Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone regarding the establishment of a Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone. We call upon States and international organizations that are in a position to provide financial support for the implementation of that instrument to do so. Of course, without that support, the completion strategy will encounter serious obstacles.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the Guatemalan presidency of the Council for convening this meeting to hear a briefing on the current status of the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the completion of its mandate. We are grateful to the President of the Special Court, The Honourable Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, and the Prosecutor, Ms. Brenda Hollis for their presentations. I would also like to welcome Her Excellency Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone to the Council.

Azerbaijan commends the Special Court for its efforts to end impunity for serious violations of international humanitarian law, thus contributing to national reconciliation and the restoration and maintenance of peace in Sierra Leone and the region and advancing the rule of law in the country. We agree with the report's assessment that the Special Court has achieved unprecedented success in delivering on the ambitious goals set for it by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations. Indeed, the establishment of the Special Court was the first partnership between national authorities and the United Nations to create a credible system of post-conflict justice that met international standards of justice. It was the first hyrbid tribunal created to assist a State that desired post-conflict justice, and it was the first tribunal to carry out its work in the territory where serious violations of international humanitarian law had been committed.

The Special Court's constribution to the development of the jurisprudence of international criminal law particular to the law of war crimes and crimes against humanity can obviously benefit other national efforts to pursue post-conflict justice, especially in those situations where the prevailing culture of impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community represents a considerable obstacle to peace and reconciliation.

We take note of the Special Court's approach to victims, especially children and women who suffered from displacement, recruitment as soldiers, sexual abuse and other crimes. We also note the Special Court's contribution to gender justice and commend the development of a special programme for the protection of women victims. I would also like to commend the Government of Sierra Leone for the cooperation and assistance it rendered to the Special Court during the course of its operation.

While encouraged by the commitment of the Special Court to complete its remaining work as expeditiously and efficiently as possible, and to ensure a smooth and successful transition of responsibilities to the Residual Special Court, the Security Council, Member States and the international community should continue to support the Court during the final phase of its work. In the same spirit, it is important to extend to the Residual Special Court the international community's encouragement and financial assistance.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and its Prosecutor for having shared with us their assessments of the work and the record of the Special Court, as well as for having expressed to us here their passion for the noble mission that they were entrusted with. I would also like to welcome the participation of Her Excellency Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for Sierra Leone, and to reiterate to her Morocco's commitment to supporting that friendly country in its efforts to consolidate peace and to transition towards stability and development.

We welcome the achievements of the Court since it was launched in 2002. The Security Council had an opportunity to express its satisfaction last April following the verdict of the Special Court in the trial of Mr. Taylor. The Council underscored the importance of that ruling for the victims of the crimes committed in Sierra Leone during the conflict as they awaited the final verdict, which is scheduled to be issued shortly.

That highly symbolic verdict was preceded by the completion of two other cases involving the heads of the Civil Defence Forces and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council. But beyond those specific cases, we continue to believe that the importance of the Special Court for Sierra Leone transcends the goal of the completion of its trials. The Court contributed to the process of consolidating peace in Sierra Leone and in the subregion and to the efforts made to restore the rule of law and end impunity. As a result of its work and the outcomes achieved, the Court represents an innovative model of mixed international justice that is

based on complementarity and national ownership. For all of those reasons, we endorse the draft presidential statement that is before the Council.

We noted with satisfaction the efforts undertaken and the progress achieved by the Special Court with respect to implementing its completion strategy and preparing for a transition towards a residual special court immediately following the completion of its mandate, by 30 September 2013. While commending the agreement on the issue between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations, we deem it important to maintain the same level of political support and ensure that it has sufficient resources, so that it can meet the many challenges inherent in this critical stage of the process, in particular the protection of witnesses, the enforcement of sentences, the preservation of archives, the protection of its physical and legal legacy, and the creation and the building of the capacities of the local judicial system.

It is indisputable that one of the major successes of the Special Court lies in its ability to involve all of the actors of Sierra Leonean society and in its outreach and awareness-raising efforts aimed not only at the general public in Sierra Leone but also at neighbouring countries. We welcome the fact that those activities will continue in the context of programmes involving the Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations and local actors, including with respect to setting up a peace museum to preserve the collective memory.

The progress made on the path to peace, justice and reconciliation by the people of Sierra Leone is all to the credit of that brotherly country, which has taken ownership of its own destiny with the support of the international community. We were able to see that directly during the recent visit of the Security Council to West Africa. In this phase of critical transformations, it is important that the international community stand mobilized for Sierra Leone so as to help it overcome its challenges in terms of strengthening democratic institutions and promoting economic development.

My country, Morocco, which has supported the brotherly people of Sierra Leone in the various phases of its ending the crisis, continues to stand ready to assist our brothers in order definitely to close this chapter of years of conflict and enable it to continue to move towards stability and prosperity.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank Ms. Fisher, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the Prosecutor of the Court for their briefings, and, more generally, the entire Special Court team for the job that they have done. I also welcome the presence here and the statement made by Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

France endorses the presidential statement drafted by the United Kingdom to commend the work of the Court.

The seriousness of the crimes perpetrated during the civil war called for a response commensurate with the gravity of the violations committed. That is why France has provided, since the inception of the Court in 2002, its full political support for the actions of this criminal court, which was jointly established by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

As we all know, the Court will conclude its work in September 2013. Its legacy is vast: the indictment of a head of State while still in office and his arrest, at a time many deemed inappropriate, have shown that arresting those who massacre civilians so as to seize or remain in power is indeed possible and effective, and that this serves the cause of peace and justice.

That is a lesson that can be applied to other cases, such as that of Bosco Ntaganda, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who formerly was a pillar of the Congrès national pour la défense du people but today is a henchman of the M-23 movement. Among the historic decisions of the Court, we note the judgement of Charles Taylor, of 30 May 2012, on which the Council has expressed its views. We welcome the jurisprudence of the Court on sensitive issues, including the recruitment of child soldiers and forced marriage.

The capacity of the Court to transfer its activities to a residual mechanism and to national courts will also be valuable as an example for other special courts. We noted the particular concerns expressed with respect to ensuring the long-term protection of witnesses. That is a key concern for all of the international criminal courts.

Lastly, we wish to highlight the assessment, financed by the European Union and described in the report, which underscores that more than 75 per cent of the people of Sierra Leone and of Liberia believe that the Tribunal has advanced the cause of justice and that an even greater number believe that the Court has served the cause of peace. These are numbers that we will need to bear in mind when, in several days, we will hold our debate on international justice. When the

Security Council enables justice to take its course by doing what is necessary and by ensuring full compliance with its resolutions, justice, in turn, can serve the cause of stability.

Today we have in place a standing system of justice with the International Criminal Court (ICC), which the Council can resort to, under Chapter VII of the Charter, at any time and on any situation. This makes the creation of new special courts obsolete in the areas of the ICC's jurisdiction: war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

The inception and the activities of the Court have illustrated the at times tragic interplay of the history of the neighbouring countries of Liberia and Sierra Leone and the manner in which the fragility of one country can affect another. But it also shows how the United Nations can contribute, by means of holistic strategies, to putting an end to crises. The Security Council was for instance able to assess, during its visit to Sierra Leone last May, the progress made: the holding of elections in November, democratic oversight, non-interference on the part of the army, the success of demobilization efforts and economic growth. There is no doubt that the Court has also contributed to those developments.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I should like to welcome to the Council today the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Shireen Fisher, and the Prosecutor, Brenda Hollis, as well as the Court's Registrar, Binta Mansaray, and the head of the Defence Office, Clare Carlton-Hanciles. I thank them for their briefings, and I congratulate them and their staff for the significant achievements of the Special Court to date. We are grateful for their dedication and commitment to the pursuit of justice.

I should like also to thank Guatemala for having scheduled this briefing today and to welcome the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone to the Council.

Today's briefings come at a pivotal juncture, as the Special Court moves towards the end of the final phase of its mandate, the extensive appeals process in the Charles Taylor case. The Special Court has been instrumental in contributing to peace and stability in Sierra Leone.

By creating a transparent and independent judicial process, the Court has brought justice and provided accountability for the people of Sierra Leone and has helped them to move on from a painful chapter in their history and that of the region.

The Special Court, moreover, has broken new ground in the field of international criminal law, including through its jurisprudence on the use of child soldiers and its recognition that sexual slavery can be a war crime and a crime against humanity. It has also shown a powerful commitment to gender issues and to combating gender-based violence. We particularly appreciate that as we mark the twelfth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security this month.

Although the trial proceedings in the Charles Taylor case have finished, the work of the Court is not yet done. We therefore welcome the finalization of the agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone on the establishment of a Residual Court that will come into existence after the conclusion of the appeals process. Its important responsibilities will include witness protection, investigations and trials for contempt, oversight of prisoners and the handling of archives.

The United States was instrumental in the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. We have appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Special Court's management committee and commend the work of the Commitee's Canadian Chair and United Kingdom co-Chair. We are proud to have been the Court's largest financial supporter, contributing more than $83 million since its inception, including a recent $2 million disbursement for fiscal year 2012. Given those contributions, we especially appreciate the efforts of President Fisher and Registrar Mansaray to reduce costs, to improve efficiency in the Special Court's operations and to lay the groundwork for an efficient and successful Residual Special Court.

The United States welcomes the broad financial support that the Court has enjoyed so far. That must continue for the Court to complete its critical mandate. President Fisher has reported a projected budget shortfall of $15 million to conclude the Court's work. The United States will endeavour to contribute towards closing that gap and urges the continued support of the international community to both the Court and the Residual Special Court so that justice is served and impunity not tolerated and so that Sierra Leone and the region can move forward in peace and security.

The Government of Sierra Leone has been a strong and committed partner of the Court. We fully support the Court's efforts to transfer its institutional knowledge to the Sierra Leone authorities. It is important to the country's ongoing democratic development that all lessons of the past be fully absorbed. The Special Court has much to offer in that regard. Once the Court completes its mandate, the international community will, of course, continue its support for peacebuilding and long-term socioeconomic development in Sierra Leone.

The Special Court has built a powerful legacy of fighting impunity and of working to bring justice to the people of Sierra Leone. The United States looks forward to the successful completion of the Court's work and the smooth transition to the Residual Special Court.

Ms. Guo Xiaomei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Let me begin by thanking President Fisher and Prosecutor Hollis for their respective briefings on the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. I would also like to thank the Deputy Minister for her statement.

We note that since 2009 the Special Court has continued to make substantive progress in its work. The judgment in the final major case has entered its last stage. The Special Court will become the first international criminal tribunal to complete its mandate and close its doors. We acknowledge the efforts made by the Court over the years. We trust that its positive achievements will serve as a reference for other international tribunals.

The Chinese Government has always supported the work of the Special Court. We note that, in accordance with the agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone, when the Special Court's work concludes, the small-scale Residual Special Court will come into operation.

We expect the Special Court and the Residual Special Court to continue to cooperate with the Government of Sierra Leone and to contribute to the lasting peace and national reconciliation of that country and the region through their judicial and other activities. To that end, we hope that the countries that are in a position to do so will continue to provide financial support to the Special Court, the Residual Special Court, Sierra Leone and the other countries concerned.

Mr. Cabral (Portugal): At the outset, allow me to thank the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their comprehensive briefings today. I would also like to welcome and to thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone for her statement.

We fully agree with the preceding interventions, which have highlighted the important role that the Special Court has played in providing justice and in fighting impunity. In the spirit of note 507 by the President on the Council's working methods (S/2010/507) and in order to avoid repeating contents, I will spare members the delivery of yet another statement. Our full statement is being circulated.

Allow me, however, to thank the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their efforts. I would also like to thank all those who work or have worked with the Court in ensuring that the mission entrusted to it will come to a successful end very soon.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Guatemala.

We are grateful for the information provided by the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, The Honourable Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, and by the Court's Prosecutor, Brenda Hollis. We also appreciate the presentation today of Her Excellency Mrs. Ebun Jusu, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, and we thank her for her statement.

We are pleased to hear of the achievements of the Special Court for Sierra Leone over the years, and we wish to commend its members on their important work. Guatemala, which is also emerging from an armed conflict, recognizes the important and valuable role of such a court in fighting impunity and in enforcing justice in the country.

We recognize the important contribution of the Special Court for Sierra Leone to national and international criminal justice through its legal proceedings against those individuals who bear the greatest responsibility for the serious violations of international humanitarian law and of Sierra Leone's national law committed since 30 November 1996.

We also underscore the Court's contribution to national reconciliation and to the restoration and maintenance of peace in Sierra Leone and in its region.

We applaud its historic contribution to the understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women

and girls, reflected in its jurisprudence and its treatment of survivors as participants in post-conflict justice.

We look forward to the final outcome of the Charles Taylor case, a paradigm case in the international criminal justice sphere, expected to conclude by 30 September, 2013.

We recognize the complex work that the Court has been conducting since its establishment in 2002 and look forward to the successful completion of its duties in September 2013. In that regard, we urge that the transition process is orderly and effective and that the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone performs its duties in a timely and efficient manner.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

After consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council expresses its warm appreciation to the President and Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their briefing to the Security Council on 9 October 2012.

"The Security Council reiterates its strong support for the Special Court and commends the progress the Special Court has achieved. The Security Council particularly notes the contribution of the Special Court to strengthening stability in Sierra Leone and the subregion and bringing an end to impunity.

"The Security Council congratulates the Special Court on the completion of the trial proceedings in the case of Charles Taylor on 30 May 2012. The Security Council takes note of the commencement of appellate proceedings in the case of Charles Taylor and the projected schedule for the completion of those appellate proceedings by 30 September 2013.

"The Security Council also acknowledges the Special Court's progress towards completion. The Security Council underlines its expectation that all organs of the Special Court will do their utmost to finish the remaining work of the Court, including any contempt cases, in accordance with the completion strategy.

"The Security Council commends the important outreach activities of the Special Court in bringing its judicial work to the attention of the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia, and thereby contributing to the restoration of the rule of law throughout those countries and the region.

"The Security Council commends the Special Court for the important contribution made to international criminal justice concerning the crimes within its jurisdiction, namely, crimes against humanity, serious violations of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, as well as certain crimes under Sierra Leonean law, and recognizes its work in the areas of women, peace and security, and the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including through its outreach and witness support programmes.

"The Security Council recognizes the need to address residual matters after the closure of the Court, including the supervision of the enforcement of sentences for convicted persons, the protection of witnesses, and the preservation of the archives of the Special Court. In this regard, the Security Council welcomes the Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone on the Establishment of a Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"The Security Council urges the international community to continue to support the Special Court as it moves into its final stage of work.

"The Security Council in particular takes note of the Special Court's ongoing and urgent need for financial support. The Security Council emphasizes the vital need for further pledges of voluntary contributions in order to allow the Special Court to complete its mandate in a timely manner. The Security Council calls upon Member States to contribute generously to the Special Court and for the implementation of the Agreement establishing the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, and encourages the Secretary-General to cooperate with the Registrar of the Special Court in order to find practicable solutions to address the needs of the Residual Special Court in the most efficient and effective manner.

"The Security Council will continue to offer strong support to the Special Court as it nears

the completion of its mandate and to the Residual Special Court as it commences its functioning."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Council under the symbol S/PRST/2012/21.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m